

Rebecca Gratz to Maria Fenno Hoffman

April 29, 1811

Philadelphia April 29th. 1811.

Once more My Dear Maria I have the pleasure of thanking you for a letter, which I began to despair of ever having it in my power to do again, and had been pouting and complaining like a humoured child who had been long indulged with a favourite amusement _ which was all at once withheld, without any reason being assigned for the deprivation. and after wearying my-self out with expedients to regain my treasure, thought of our neighbour Liepers threat to his patron Jefferson. and in the wrathful spirit of the above worthy Gentleman sent you a message by our friend Washington that I would write no more _ not doubting that such a penalty would produce the desired effect _ Now for the love you bear me let me bear that the message miscarried or my vanity may suppose that I am indebted to it for your letter and you know not how impertinent that thought might make me. Ann and I are in the habit of comparing notes on this subject she says you are very cautious of exciting any jealousy between us, that you seldom give her a longer one than you send to me, and are more just and equitable in all your dealings, but not quite so generous in epistolary matters as one could wish. however, I am less disposed to murmur at the past. than to be thankful for the present favour. and look forward to the future with a hope of more abundant harvest. Our Friend Mrs. Meredith will be in New York tomorrow, and I hope you will see her, she has been about ten days at the Vale, and is a good deal affected at the thoughts of the familys leaving it. I received a charming letter from her this Morning _ there is nothing more calculated to affect a mind of sensibility than revisiting a spot, once the seat of hospitality and joy _ and to find it spoild of the venerable and respected host _ and every where observing sorrow & desolation
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and mourning, instead of the voice of mirth and domestic enjoyment

I can imagine what her feelings are by my own _ for tho' comparatively a stranger at the Vale, I never felt more melancholy than in comparing my last _ with former visits there _ Mrs. M's grief for her recent misfortunes are all renewed by meeting with her Mother and on the spot where they occurred.

you will be quite near neighbors to Mrs. Ogden when you are fixed in your new habitation, tho you have been so long in the habit of changing your abode every Year that I fear they may not calculate on long possessing that advantage. Mrs. Colden tells me she left you in the bustle of moving so I hope you will be settled before the rest of the city begin their hub bub. It is well Cooke & Cooper are not performing in New York at this important moment, or I apprehend your sober citizens would be completely beat off the ground. nothing can exceed the struggling for Boxes _

the crowding at the doors of the theatre, the pressing for seats and the delights of the audience _ for four successive nights we have been quite deserted, every body gone to the play. and I never heard such praise bestowed on mortal powers before. Sully has made a fine picture of him and we are to have a full length one placed in the Academy of Arts, thus you see public honours are decreed to this great actor, a Young man of extraordinary talents, who has never been instructed in the [art?] of painting has made several likenesses of Cooke in the different characters, in which he has appeared he has gained great celebrity from them, and I hear is patronized by the society of artists, who mean to send him to England to be instructed by West.

Your account of our dear Eliza grieves me exceedingly _ that she is pale and thin, must arise from her being either out of health, or out of spirits, and I greatly fear this spirit of procrastination so much to be reprobated in circumstances like hers, is not altogether harmless. The month of May is close at hand, that season of smiles and happiness and new-born beauty. It seems intended by nature, that all creation should rejoice when she puts on such gay apparel, and sends her fragrance abroad to delight the senses. and all creation seems better to understand & fulfil her intention, than the great
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creature endowed with reason to enjoy her gifts.

I hope your little Charles is recovered, and the rest of your flock will continue to enjoy health. we have such good accounts of you, that I hope you give over your former pretensions to great delicacy. and will become as fat as Maria Fenno used to be, we have not heard very lately from Jo but a Gentleman lately arrived from England mentions that he intended taking passage in the Essex so that we may expect him daily. tho' he should not [sail] for a month. it is so uncertain when a government machine will be set in motion. I am glad to hear George has a prospect of gratifying his wishes in a voyage. My Brother Jacob is anxious to follow his example and I fear we shall have to part with him too. Ben has completed his College studies, and unless he fixes himself down in a profession, will in a [...] perhaps feel the same disposition to wander _

The [Girls] send you their affectionate love, Rachel moves next week into Chesnut Street, present me affectionately to your husband, and Eliza & Mary. and believe me my dearest friend ever most truly

Yours RG _

[Address:]

Mrs. Ogden Hoffman
New York